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The Transnationality of European Nationalist Movements

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Multiple occurrences of large international protest mobilisations in the past thirty years (ecology, anti-nuclear, anti-war, anti-globalisation) lend credence to the hypothesis of the transnationality of social movements. For the American social movement theorist Sidney Tarrow, shared grievances across borders do not necessitate the formation of effective and sustained activism that could contribute to transnational movement identities⁽¹⁾. Yet, when confronted with sets of opportunities that are conducive to cross-border exchanges, activists engage in collective, public, contentious and transnational efforts to make claims on international policy or social values. International organisations and finance bodies, multinational corporations and global media and lobby institutions have all contributed to the emergence of mobilisations that are targeted at networks of globalisation, with high levels of mobility, coordination, and communication across nation-state boundaries. There is now a large body of research to analyze the mobilisation across borders and the resulting collective action in a multi-level political context. What is more, this work mostly identifies, in parallel with institutional and cultural processes of European integration, the 'Europeanisation of protest'⁽²⁾. Transnational contention in Europe increasingly uses mobilisation frames that are linked to and targeted at the policy-making of the European Union. Transnational protest against war is also considered to be a bottom-up process of identity formation. Particularly, the mass-scale anti-war protests of 15 February 2003 ahead of the allied invasion of Iraq are cited as examples of a correlation between international policy issues and transnational activism⁽³⁾.

(1) Sidney TARROW, *The New Transnational Activism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

(2) Doug IMIG & Sidney TARROW, eds., *Contentious Europeans: Protest and Politics in an Emerging Polity*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2001; Bert KLANDERMANS et al., "Social Movements and Europeanization", in *West European Politics*, vol. 33, 2010, p. 399-414; Donatella DELLA PORTA & Manuela CAIANI, "Europeanization from Below? Social Movements and Europe", in *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, vol. 12, 2007, p. 1-20; D. DELLA PORTA & M. CAIANI, *Social Movements and Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; Andy MATHERS, *Struggling for a Social Europe: Neoliberal Globalization and the Birth of a European Social Movement*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007.

(3) Jürgen HABERMAS & Jacques DERRIDA, "February 15, or, What Binds Europeans Together", in Daniel LEVY, Max PENSKY & John TORPEY, eds., *Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe: Transatlantic Relations After the Iraq War*, New York, Verso, 2005, p. 3-13; Helma DE VRIES, "Europeanization, Enlargement, and the Emergence of Transnational Contention", Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Chicago, 28 February 2007.

This article takes a broader view of transnational activism to extend this analysis into the realm of extreme nationalist movements⁽⁴⁾. To what extent do far right and neo-fascist activists maintain transnational networks, socially or politically? Is there evidence of a common movement identity, especially in Europe? Does Europe in fact entail a particular power of mobilisation for extreme nationalist politics? To answer these questions affirmatively should prove controversial. Nationalist politics and transnational activism appear to be mutually exclusive. Although, to some extent, the formation of far right factions in the European Parliament has institutionalised co-operation of extreme nationalist parties and organisations in Europe, they are rarely able to find a long-lasting common denominator, as episodic failures to maintain a coherent far right coalition in the European Parliament illustrate. Often, co-operation remains on the level of a 'Europe of nations' rather than a 'Nation Europe', and so appears more international than transnational.

However, the focus on such obvious instances of cross-national alliances of the far right risks underestimating a radical Europeanism as the source of neo-fascist agitation. It would neglect the fact that fascism has strong roots in a potentially unifying Euro-centric ideology. This Europeanism, however, is not necessarily at odds with nationalism. Based on common ideological positions, we can witness increasing networking attempts on organisational levels that contradict the exclusive juxtaposition of nationalism and internationalism⁽⁵⁾. It is certainly the case that both far right political parties and the militant neo-Nazi scenes are building European connections not solely on the basis of co-operation but with reference to a perceived common 'destiny'. Whether it is at white-supremacist music festivals or during 'peace' marches, Europe's ultra-nationalists assert their common European identity. At first this appears contradictory given the strong xenophobic elements that persist in those political movements. However, a look at the history of the continent's fascist ideology reveals this neglected aspect in the study of the far right: extreme nationalism and pan-Europeanism have gone hand in hand throughout their intellectual history and continue to do so.

While this is not true of all far right political action, the 'European faction' of the extreme right can rally behind the perceived values of Europe and unite against the perceived threat of American cultural imperialism. As we will see, those find some resonance in contemporary neo-Nazi social movements. Those movements have put a focus upon building a European network based upon a common understanding of notions of Western (European) culture and values. To illustrate this, this article draws on instances of neo-Nazi and far right mobilisation in Germany. This is no arbitrary choice of case study. Today, Europe features largely in German nationalist politics, which is further accompanied by a close relationship of the Third Reich's National Socialism and the topic of Europe. The example of neo-Nazism in Germany,

(4) A rare example of this approach is Devashree GUPTA, "Nationalism Across Borders: Transnational Nationalist Advocacy in the European Union", in *Comparative European Politics*, vol. 6, 2008, p. 61-80.

(5) See for example Thomas GRUMKE & Thomas GREVEN, eds., *Globalisierter Rechtsextremismus? Die extremistische Rechte in der Ära der Globalisierung*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag, 2006; Christina S. LIANG, ed., *Europe for the Europeans: the Foreign and Security Policy of the Populist Radical Right*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007.

but also neo-fascist agitation in other European countries, indicates a shift on the right-wing extremist agenda that is increasingly concerned with questions of social equality, employment, globalisation and even capitalism⁽⁶⁾. Remarkably, a diverse European extreme nationalist movement that calls itself 'anti-capitalist' can be identified. Movement supporters attend Mayday rallies, demonstrate against the institutions of global capital and mobilise to anti-war protests. The rhetoric employed thereby strikingly resembles criticisms that are familiar in the left-wing anti-globalisation movements. We will thus first identify extreme nationalist activism as an instance of anti-globalisation protest in the German context, before drawing out some of the historical precursors to contemporary far right Europeanism. Finally, contemporary examples of transnational movement mobilisation that have a distinct European, as well as extreme nationalist, dimension are explored.

Apart from secondary sources, in order to demonstrate the continuing importance of the transnational notion of Europe in the mobilisation of extreme nationalist activists, the article cites primary texts that convey a far right self-understanding as anti-globalist, yet international. Primarily these include the websites and flyer texts for far right anti-globalisation protests in Germany and rallies that drew participants from across the continent. However, to complete the picture, anti-fascist research and literature is also used. All translations from German into English are mine.

Nationalism as a social movement

The erosion of the European model of the welfare state is not just a topic for left-wing political parties and social movements. Increasingly, neo-fascists and neo-Nazis have begun to adopt the 'social question' for their own political purposes⁽⁷⁾. With attempts to scapegoat immigrants for economic and social problems, extreme right-wing parties have found enough justifications to oppose an attack on Keynesian-style politics by onslaught of neo-liberal globalisation. Neo-liberal welfare reforms have angered far right voters across the continent, especially where there are feelings that 'indigenous' populations are targeted disproportionately. Political parties and organisations close to the far right or neo-Nazi spectrum have tried to exploit such sentiments. 'Globalisation' is portrayed as the erosion of national-

(6) See for example Thomas GRUMKE & Andreas KLAERNER, *Rechtsextremismus, die soziale Frage und Globalisierungskritik: eine vergleichende Studie zu Deutschland und Großbritannien seit 1990*, Berlin, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2006; Armin PFAHL-TRAUGHER, "Globalisierung als Agitationsthema des organisierten Rechtsextremismus in Deutschland", in T. GRUMKE & T. GREVEN, eds., *Globalisierter Rechtsextremismus?*, *op. cit.*, p. 30-51; Christina S. LIANG, "'Nationalism Ensures Peace': the Foreign and Security Policy of the German Populist Radical Right after (Re)unification", in Christina S. LIANG, ed., *Europe for the Europeans*, *op. cit.*, p. 139-175; Bernd SOMMER, "Anti-Capitalism in the Name of Ethno-Nationalism: Ideological Shifts on the German Extreme Right", in *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 42, 2008, p. 305-316; Roger WOODS, *Germany's New Right as Culture and Politics*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

(7) See for example Bernd SOMMER, "Anti-Capitalism", *op. cit.*, p. 305-16; Dwayne WOODS, "Pockets of Resistance to Globalization: the Case of the Lega Nord", in *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 43, 2009, p. 161-177.

cultural values and as an attack against the achievements of the European social model of the welfare state. In much of extreme nationalist thought, the 'economy' is not seen as an autonomous entity but is supposed to serve the national populace⁽⁸⁾.

Extreme nationalism is far from constituting a homogenous ideology. Much disagreement exists between groups, parties or individuals. Conflict also prevails between different national organisations or movements. The following short exposé of German neo-Nazi ideology thus by no means covers the various positions in their entirety. Instead it focuses on those ideological manifestations that are directed against 'globalisation' or 'capitalism' *per se*. Even here, one might distinguish between an anti-globalisation critique (mainly voiced by organisations and political parties which aim to appear respectable, democratic and 'close to the people') and an 'anti-capitalist' critique (as expressed by the more radical spectrum of the various neo-Nazi movements) as their proponents can sometimes stand in antagonism to each other⁽⁹⁾. On the other hand, recent co-operation between political parties and movement organisations has led to some significant overlap of efforts⁽¹⁰⁾.

In Germany, anti-globalisation arguments are increasingly found in established far right and nationalist parties and organisations. At times this can be explained by the changeover in leadership of those groups. Beginning in the 1970s, neo-Nazis have now almost entirely replaced the 'old-Nazi' cadres as group-leaders. This is certainly so in the case of the most prominent German far right party, the National Democratic Party (NPD). It understands itself as leading at once a "battle for the streets" and a "battle for the parliaments"⁽¹¹⁾ referring explicitly to globalisation and capitalism: "The NPD decidedly rejects the internationalisation of national economies, which is systematically advanced by the capitalist economic order [...] The NPD also rejects the globalisation of the German economy because it has directly led to mass unemployment." Instead the party advocates "a diverse and balanced social economy", which is a "geographically-defined [*raumorientiert*] economic order"⁽¹²⁾. Militant neo-Nazi movements have found themselves attracted to the NPD's new rhetoric. They interpret National Socialism as the opposition to, what they denote as, global capitalism. Global capitalism, in its neo-Nazi meaning, represents the attack by the global financial elite on the national working classes. Most neo-Nazi ideology does not end with the demand for more nation-state intervention and labour opportunities for the national working class. Instead, it extends its analysis and solidarity to encompass the 'universal right' of self-determination for 'peoples' and 'nations' worldwide, which goes hand in hand with the repression of 'foreigners', and often

(8) Peter DAVIES & Derek LYNCH, *The Routledge Companion to Fascism and the Far Right*, London, Routledge, 2002, p. 139-150.

(9) Wolfram SIEDE, "Machtgerangel unter Neonazis", in *Junge Welt*, 23 February 2005.

(10) Lars RENSMANN, "From High Hopes to On-Going Defeat: The New Extreme Right's Political Mobilization and its National Electoral Failure in Germany", in *German Politics & Society*, vol. 24, 2006, p. 67-92.

(11) T. GRUMKE & A. KLAERNER, *Rechtsextremismus, die soziale Frage und Globalisierungskritik*, op. cit., p. 34.

(12) Quoted in A. PFAHL-TRAUGHER, "Globalisierung als Agitationsthema", op. cit., p. 34.

Jews⁽¹³⁾. In Germany and some other European countries, we can witness the (re-)emergence of a self-proclaimed 'national-revolutionary' movement, which has helped to put renewed emphasis on 'social-revolutionary' politics in some neo-Nazi scenes⁽¹⁴⁾. German militant neo-Nazis are often organised in so called *Freie Kameradschaften* (free fellowships). It is here that an 'anti-capitalist' self-understanding can most clearly be found. It can be traced back to the 'left wing' of Hitler's NSDAP party and in particular to the ideas of Gregor and Otto Strasser and to the leader of the SA, Ernst Röhm. From the 'national-revolutionary' perspective, those men formed part of a revolutionary, 'anti-capitalist' wing within the NSDAP, with the aim to replace a class-based society with a socialist and culturalist (*völkisch*) economic system⁽¹⁵⁾.

Good examples for the renewed interest from the extreme right for the social question are the mobilisations for 'Mayday' or 'Labour Day'. What is seen by the left as a day for international solidarity with the working classes of all countries is an event of solidarity with the national working class for the right. Neo-Nazis and far right groups celebrate 'their' Labour Day with references to social topics. In Germany in 2007, six Mayday events were advertised by the NPD⁽¹⁶⁾. The chosen mottos for the demonstrations sounded rather radical: "*Together against capitalism! Come out on May 1st!*", "*Future not globalisation*", "*Free people not free markets*", and "*Work for millions not profits for millionaires*". Sometimes, the openly pronounced racism of the past decades all but disappears from the slogans on banners, placards, and flyers. In its place appears a concern for the degradation of morals, for work and social equality, and for the values of people (*Volk*) and nation. This is not unique to Germany. In France for example, the *Front National* mobilised for its traditional march on 9 May to remind its activists of "all the deaths caused by Yankee imperialist wars all over the world for 50 years"⁽¹⁷⁾.

In 2007, 'national revolutionaries' and the NPD also demonstrated together in Frankfurt, the "city of the banks and the stock exchange, the international high finance and 'the Global Players'", to give voice to its "anti-capitalist" politics⁽¹⁸⁾. Frankfurt, they proclaimed in the English translation of their call was "a perfect place for this demonstration":

"At the stock exchange billion-gains are obtained and just a few hundred meters away from there homeless Germans die on the street. Many people in Frankfurt live on social welfare [sic] and how shall they find work when the labour market is flooded by low-wages workers?

Against the antisocial system of 'free'-market economy we set the principle [sic] of the national economy, which does not serve the profits of the

(13) See for example C.S. LIANG, "Nationalism Ensures Peace", *op. cit.*, p. 139-75.

(14) See for example Anonymous, "Aktionsbündnisse für den 'Kampf um die Straße': Konzept und Struktur der 'Freien Kameradschaften'", in *Antifaschistisches Infoblatt*, 52, Spring 2001.

(15) See for example P. DAVIES & D. LYNCH, *The Routledge*, *op. cit.*, p. 139-150; Ingrid SKRYPETZ, "Militant Right-Wing Extremism in Germany", in *German Politics*, vol. 3, 1994, p. 133-40.

(16) Jan LANGEHEIN, "Ein Globus, viele Völker", in *Jungle World*, 28 February 2007.

(17) Agir, "Lorsque l'esprit se souvient, la flamme se maintient", in *Agir*, March/April 2007, p. 3.

(18) NPD Hessen, "Invitation for an Anti-Capitalistic Demonstration", <http://www.arbeit-statt-dividende.de> (4 April 2010).

millionaires, but for the welth [sic] and the satisfaction of requirements for our people”.

Shielded from anti-fascist protesters by thousands of police officers, a few hundred Neo-Nazis thus marched through Frankfurt with the motto “*Work not dividends*”. Such mobilisations see ‘capitalism’ as its enemy, and the enemy of all ‘peoples’. Capitalism is described as profit-driven and nomadic, manifesting itself in “banks, stock exchanges and speculation funds”⁽¹⁹⁾. Political conspiracies and finance capitalists are accused of forcing a world market onto all national economies and communities. The ‘anti-capitalist’ campaign ‘Future not Globalisation’ states:

“Even if the ruling politicians and the representatives of big money will tell you the opposite, capitalism and globalisation lead to masses of losers and only small groups of winners. The losers are entire peoples [sic] and the winners are speculators, corporate bosses, bankers and corrupt politicians.

The only effective socialist weapon against international capital is its counter-principle of nationalism – structuring, rooted and linked to home and people. Nationalism fights against the capitalist degradation of human beings with its own idea of social order: the national community [*Volksgemeinschaft*]”.

On the one hand, here, the anti-globalisation focus of the extreme nationalist right is opportunist. It is not difficult to imagine how the foreshortened⁽²⁰⁾, ‘anti-capitalist’ criticism made by the far right of ‘Jewish finance capital’ and globalisation processes can be tied to a notion of national belonging. Most right-wing anti-globalisation rhetoric celebrates nationhood as a model to defeat the effects of ‘globalism’. At a time where progressive responses to globalisation from left-wing new social movements have received increasing public attention, the far right seeks to occupy this terrain with its own perspective. On the other hand, however, an exclusive focus on political opportunity structures cannot show the whole picture of extreme nationalism as a social movement. For a start, of course, the attention to the social question is not new. We might only think of the corporatism of the ‘old’ fascism or the ‘querfront’ strategies during the Weimar Republic⁽²¹⁾. One would be misled, therefore, to regard the extreme nationalist adoption of anti-globalisation rhetoric as a simple attempt at imitation. It might be true that the themes of social reforms and capitalism are being used strategically in areas where traditional racism and prejudices have little appeal. This does

(19) Zukunft statt Globalisierung, “Aufruf”, <http://www.antikap.de/?antikap=aufruf> (4 April 2009).

(20) See Moishe POSTONE, “Anti-Semitism and National Socialism”, in Anson RABINACH & Jack ZIPES, eds., *Germans and Jews since the Holocaust: The Changing Situation in West Germany*, London, Holmes and Meier, 1986, p. 302-314.

(21) For example, Timothy S. BROWN, “Richard Scheringer, the KPD and the Politics of Class and Nation in Germany, 1922-1969”, in *Contemporary European History*, vol. 14, 2005, p. 317-346; Otto-Ernst SCHUEDEDEKOPF, *Linke Leute von Rechts: die nationalrevolutionären Minderheiten und der Kommunismus in Weimarer Republik*, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer Verlag, 1960.

not preclude, however, that the significance of a 'critique of capitalism' for neo-Nazis is real⁽²²⁾.

Where contemporary far right movements equate globalisation with 'American cultural imperialism', the obvious counter-force is 'Europe'. On an increasing number of neo-Nazi mobilisations, for instance, slogans and banners that evoke a 'spirit of Europe' can be found, alongside ideas that stress the 'common destiny' of the 'European peoples'. While pan-European fascism is certainly not new, as we will see, it is interesting to note how it is now linked to 'anti-capitalism' and 'third position' ideology.

The origins of nationalist Europeanism

The longing for the (re-)discovery of an imagined, authentic Europe is no recent phenomenon. Gerard Delanty traces its intellectual roots in an earlier era of what he calls "European pessimism"⁽²³⁾. In the political, legal and literary texts of the European intelligentsia he detects a pessimist and decadent Zeitgeist that attempted to "rescue the idea of Europe from the nihilism of modernity"⁽²⁴⁾ and really marked a European identity. Sometimes, the pessimistic view of European civilisation was based upon an intellectual anti-Modernism and the romanticism of the post-Enlightenment era. As Delanty puts it, the European pessimism was "a return to a supposedly authentic European culture as a substitute for the intellectual void of modernity and technological civilization"⁽²⁵⁾. Delanty also stresses the European dimension of the feeling of European degeneration. According to him, the Catholic writings of Ortega y Gasset were concerned with the tradition of the 'European spirit', just as were the critiques of mass society by Emile Durkheim or T.S. Eliot, the cultural pessimism of Friedrich Nietzsche, or the works of Heidegger and Carl Schmitt.

The European pessimism that Delanty describes came to its culmination in Weimar Germany in the intellectual movement of the Conservative Revolution⁽²⁶⁾. Here the antagonistic themes of culture and civilisation were really played out to achieve political force. The Conservative Revolution movement refers to the circles of intellectuals in post-World War I Germany, who argued for a cultural and political revolution against both communism and liberalism, with the aim of a unified *Volksgemeinschaft*, or peoples'

(22) Ursula MEYER, "Rechts, Links... alles der gleiche Sumpf?", in TOP Berlin, ed., *Nationaler Sozialismus: 'Antikapitalismus' von völkischen Freaks*, Berlin, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2007, p. 6-9 (<http://top-berlin.net>).

(23) Gerard DELANTY, *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1995, p. 109-111.

(24) G. DELANTY, *Inventing Europe*, op. cit., p. 110.

(25) G. DELANTY, *Inventing Europe*, op. cit., p. 110.

(26) See for example Stefan BREUER, *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993; Armin PFAHL-TRAUGHER, *Konservative Revolution und Neue Rechte: Rechtsextremistische Intellektuelle gegen den demokratischen Verfassungsstaat*, Opladen, Leske & Budrich, 1998; Rold P. SIEFERLE, *Die Konservative Revolution: Fünf biographische Skizzen*, Frankfurt, Fischer Taschenbuch, 1995; Roger WOODS, *The Conservative Revolution in the Weimar Republic*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1996.

community. They were right-wing and conservative political agitators and writers who often had little more in common than their disquiet or outright hostility to the Weimar Republic, which for them represented the decline of German culture, disorder and chaos. Many voiced their opposition through authoritarianism and radical nationalism and a chauvinistic desire for a clear social hierarchy. As such their works influenced various political manifestations of fascism and were an undeniable precursor, albeit an uneasy one, to the ideologies of the Third Reich. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the Conservative Revolution movement had thus emerged as a very heterogeneous assemblage of right-wing ideologies and intellectuals.

Nonetheless there were some common features. The glorification of culture and the disgust for civilisation became one of those themes. For Oswald Spengler, who with his 1918 book *The Decline of the West* set the tone for the Conservative Revolution movement, civilisation was “the most external and artificial state of which humanity is capable”⁽²⁷⁾. Civilisation, for Spengler, was devoid of soul and spirit, essential ingredients to healthy and functioning social organisms. Moreover, civilisation was destructive, having taken the place of culture as its ‘corpse’. Similarly, with his argument for compatibility of German socialism and authoritarian leadership, Arthur Möller van den Bruck, who Mosse calls “the prophet of the ‘third way’”⁽²⁸⁾, also influenced later National Socialism. He advocated a German socialism, which was to unite a corporate social order with the spirit of the German Volk. This had nothing in common with Marxist socialism but was explicitly defined against its materialism and internationalism as in his assertion that “every people has its own socialism”⁽²⁹⁾. Social, economic and even racial-biological factors should not stand in the way of the true realisation of the German Volk. Rather, Möller van den Bruck’s conservative revolutionary perspective of ‘The Third Reich’ was one of an ideological and spiritual revolution.

Contemporary proponents of conservative revolutionary ideas, such as Armin Mohler, did not see a contradiction in terms⁽³⁰⁾. The Conservative Revolution was conservative because of its basis in tradition and romanticism and its belief in the organic unity of the nation or Volk. But it was also revolutionary because it wanted to do away with bourgeois and liberal society and provided an attack on finance and speculative capitalism. It expressed the idea that a reformist attitude towards preserving tradition and culture was impossible; revolution was needed. At its heart, the Conservative Revolution was a reaction to a perceived crisis of social modernisation and industrialism. As such, Mohler identifies Nietzsche as one of the central figures to influence the movement⁽³¹⁾. Nietzsche described the self-destruction of the Western World and questioned the linearity of progressive thinking with his idea

(27) Quoted in George L. MOSSE, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964, p. 6.

(28) G.L. MOSSE, *The Crisis of German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 281.

(29) Quoted in G.L. MOSSE, *The Crisis of German Ideology*, op. cit., p. 281.

(30) Armin MOHLER, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918-1932: ein Handbuch*, Second edition, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972.

(31) A. MOHLER, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918-1932*, op. cit., p. 86-90.

of 'return'. The revolutionary conservatism that Mohler also subscribed to was strictly anti-materialist, rejecting the class-based analyses of social fragmentation. It upheld instead the values of an organic whole, the nation as a 'Volkisch' conception of social cohesion.

The most significant feature of the Conservative Revolution movement's relationship to Europe was its self-understanding as a 'third way' or 'third path' movement set in opposition to both liberalism and communism⁽³²⁾. There is thus a strong overlap with the national revolutionary agenda that would emerge on the 'Strasser-wing' on the left of the NSDAP. Both were challenges to Hitler that came to an end with the persecution and purges of 'reactionaries' by Hitler in the 'Night of the Long Knives' in 1934⁽³³⁾. Importantly, the 'third way' is essentially European, referring to a European spirit that is set against the two opposing ideologies of West and East and is able to do justice to the authentic character of European identity. The movement's European elements are also found in similar conceptions of European culture by intellectuals of the continent, amongst them George Sorel, Julius Evola, Vilfredo Pareto or Charles Maurras. Within Europe, however, Germany would take the dominant role of influence. In fact, the Conservative Revolution is inseparable from the era of the Weimar Republic. After the defeat in World War I and the perceived humiliation of the treaty of Versailles, the Weimar Republic epitomised the decline of the West. The Bolshevik revolution, on the other hand, was seen as a tangible threat from the East. The 'new' Germany would have to be conceived as a force strong and confident enough to restore a 'natural' social order to the whole continent.

Despite the purges of 1934, National Socialism and fascism continued to be influenced by a 'third way' European dimension. While fascism was based on the concept of the nation, it was also a project that attempted to revive the European spirit to create a new Europe. For Delanty, fascism was directly linked to the European Idea:

"It was the dream of all fascists from Mosley via Mussolini to Hitler to create a truly European supra-national civilisation. [...] To this end, the idea of the 'New Europe' was an aesthetic fiction for a future fascist Europe. Fascism was compatible with the European ideal. [...] In fact, fascist ideology can even be seen as the apotheosis of the idea of Europe"⁽³⁴⁾.

(32) Another notion of a 'third path' was the then popular concept of *Mittleuropa*, constructed against both Western liberalism and Eastern communism. On the one hand, *Mittleuropa* is connected to negative imperial notions of a pan-German empire and finally attempted politically by the Third Reich. On the other hand, others have argued for a more positive history of the concept as a unifying meaning for a multi-ethnic region with Austro-Hungarian spirit. See Patricia CHIANTERE-STUTTE, "Space, Großraum and Mittleuropa in Some Debates of the Early Twentieth Century", in *European Journal of Social Theory*, vol. 11, 2008, p. 185-201.

(33) Hitler's purge of 1934 was mainly directed against the prominent leaders of the SA. However, also non-military proponents of the Conservative Revolution were arrested and killed. Amongst them was Edgar Julius Jung, one of the most influential radical conservative critics of the National Socialist mass movement.

(34) G. DELANTY, *Inventing Europe*, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

Also in Mark Mazower's study, *Dark Continent*, fascism in general and German National Socialism in particular are described as ideologies with strong Eurocentric character: "National Socialism, in particular, fits into the mainstream not only of German but also of European history far more comfortably than most people like to admit"⁽³⁵⁾.

While the line of National Socialist thought can be traced back to German romanticism and the Conservative Revolution, there are significant differences nonetheless. The anti-modern and anti-progressive element that characterised the Conservative Revolution is less influential. In its place emerged a violent anti-Semitism as the defining characteristic of the Third Reich. And of course, after the Strasser-faction on the left of the NSDAP was largely eliminated after 1934, the party was ready to accept a politics that was more reformist than that of the national-revolutionaries and less conservative than that of the proponents of radical conservatism. A remaining feature was, albeit subordinated to anti-Semitism and to the military effort, the search for a third path between Marxism and liberal capitalism. Moreover, the location for this third path ideology remained the political and cultural space of Europe. As Mark Mazower puts it, "Fascism, after all, was the most Eurocentric of the three major ideologies, far more so than either communism or liberal democracy: a creed that was both anti-American and anti-Bolshevik"⁽³⁶⁾. And he concludes:

"A self-belief rooted in Christianity, capitalism, the Enlightenment and massive technological superiority encouraged Europeans to see themselves over a long period as a civilizational model for the globe. Their trust in Europe's world mission was already evident in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and reached its apogee in the era of imperialism. Hitler was in many ways its culminating figure and through the Nazi New Order came closer to its realization than anyone else"⁽³⁷⁾.

The fascist idea of European unity, while lacking the German romanticist history, had early on found strong support in parts of the British fascist movement, and mainly in its figurehead Oswald Mosley. Mosley is best known for founding and leading the British Union of Fascists. It was in the circles around the BUF that the 'Europe a Nation' idea sparked considerable interest. A Conservative MP and then Fabian socialist in his early political years, Mosley founded the New Party in 1931. The New Party was based on Mosley's corporate economic policies designed to meet the crisis of the Great Depression. The Party became increasingly fascist until, in 1932, Mosley united it with other British fascist organisations to form the anti-communist and protectionist British Union of Fascists.

As early as 1936 (in an essay published as *The World Alternative*⁽³⁸⁾) and especially with the beginning of the war, Mosley began promoting a

(35) Mark MAZOWER, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*, New York, Vintage Books, 1998, p. XII.

(36) M. MAZOWER, *Dark Continent*, *op. cit.*, p. XIV.

(37) M. MAZOWER, *Dark Continent*, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

(38) See Roger GRIFFIN, "'Europe for the Europeans': Fascist Myths of the European New Order 1922-1992", in Matthew FELDMAN, ed., *A Fascist Century: Essays by Roger Griffin*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2008, p. 248.

European peace settlement based on sovereignty and independence for the major European powers. After the war, he continued to argue for the idea 'Europe a Nation' that would be able to transcend hostility between European states through a pan-European fascist movement, which he called 'European Socialism'⁽³⁹⁾. Mosley's new party, the Union Movement, moved away from a narrowly defined nationalism towards embracing a fascistic conception of European unity. Here, Mosley argued that only a strong unified Europe could act as a counterbalance to the two superpowers, the USSR and the USA. The BUF and the Union Movement were not only anti-communist and anti-American, but deeply anti-Semitic. Both Bolshevik communism and US-style capitalism could be demonised as Jewish conspiracies. Dave Renton shows how a number of fascist texts of the time combined anti-Jewish and anti-finance elements:

"What was wrong with capital, according to the fascists, was its links with the worlds of finance. They argued that finance was usury and that usury was, in the Duke of Bedford's phrase, 'what the modern Jew has successfully taught the world'. If only the financiers could be liquidated in the interests of industry, then all would be well. [...] Fascist attacks on finance were predicated on absolute support for industrial capital"⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Hoping that this anti-finance, anti-Semitic theme could unite European fascist parties, Mosley attempted a number of pan-European initiatives, with the *Italian Social Movement* (MSI), the Spanish *Falange* and the Belgian *Jeune Europe* as some of the main partners. The 'European Social Movement' was based largely on the Italian MSI model and functioned as an alliance of European neo-fascist parties. It was superseded by the 'National Party of Europe', which provided a more concrete and organised platform, in which Mosley also took a lead role⁽⁴¹⁾.

Independent from Mosley's efforts after the war, a small group of British fascists emerged from the British Union of Fascists that shared Mosley's focus on Europe, but chose different tactics to advance the idea. In 1948, they founded the European Liberation Front as an organisation that would attempt to introduce the European idea into the circles of fascist elites. The short-lived group was based around the American Francis Parker Yockey, who in his book *Imperium* had argued for the abandonment of nation-state thinking in favour of a pan-European approach. He had come into conflict with Mosley however over the question of the United States. For Mosley, the Soviet Union remained the main enemy for fascists in Europe, while Yockey argued that the United States had to be taken seriously as Europe's prime competitor. Yockey also placed emphasis on a cultural reading of nationhood, and rejected the concept of race⁽⁴²⁾. The European Liberation Front would later develop a more National Bolshevik tendency.

(39) See R. GRIFFIN, "Europe for the Europeans", *op. cit.*; Oswald MOSLEY, "European Socialism", in *The European*, May 1956.

(40) Dave RENTON, "Was Fascism an Ideology? British Fascism Reconsidered", in *Race & Class*, vol. 41, 2000, p. 78-79.

(41) R. GRIFFIN, "Europe for the Europeans", *op. cit.*, p. 248.

(42) Keith COOGAN, "Lost Imperium: The European Liberation Front (1949-54)", in *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 36, 2002, p. 9-23.

Mosley's and Yockey's ideas fit seamlessly into the history not only of a romantic, conservative and fascistic Europeanism, but also into a tendency of far right thought that stresses its European 'third position' in between the communism of the Soviet Union and the capitalist liberalism of the United States. As such, the extreme nationalist notion of Europe has been linked to revolutionary ideas that were both anti-materialist and anti-liberal. The 'third position' was certainly nationalist, though this did not preclude the conceptualisation of a supra-national entity adopting the meaning of 'Europe a Nation'. Finally, the role that Europe would assume was perceived as a return to, or reawakening of, a supposedly authentic and natural culture, freed of the corrupting influence of modern civilisation.

Contemporary European nationalist movements

Since 1945, there have been renewed attempts to bring together various nationalist and extreme right parties and organisations across nation-states. The intellectual effort is often characterised by a reconstruction of 'Europe' as the central idea of Aryan mythology; sometimes as a defensive conceptualisation to protect the values of Christianity, and sometimes as an offensive programme of liberation from both Bolshevik attacks and capitalist rule, seeing itself as engaging in a battle for the continental liberation from political and cultural colonisation. Conservative Revolutionary ideas continue to inspire the political action of contemporary intellectual nationalists (such as the *Nouvelle Droite*) as well as far right social movements. In terms of social movement mobilisation, the German neo-Nazi scene serves again as a prism through which to discern the impact of Europeanist ideology on transnational organisation within extreme nationalist movements. In this section I briefly give the examples of the *Fest der Völker* and of the Rudolf Hess marches.

The *Fest der Völker* (Festival of the Peoples), subtitled 'For a Europe of Nations', has been held in the East German state of Thuringia since 2005. The event features right-wing extremist rock bands from all over Europe, mainly from the Blood and Honour network, and is advertised through Europe-wide networks. Speakers are representatives and leaders of far right parties from a number of European countries, some of whom work together in the European National Front⁽⁴³⁾. Banners advocate the unity of European peoples, such as "Europe awake – brothers in arms of Europe in the alliance for freedom"⁽⁴⁴⁾. The website boasts slogans such as "We are Europe!" or "Europe will live or go down with us!"⁽⁴⁵⁾. *Fest der Völker* was the title of a Leni Riefenstahl film about the Berlin Olympic Games. It thus puts the

(43) The ENF is a co-ordinating platform for European far right parties, which tend to subscribe to a Third Positionist ideology.

(44) Holger KULICK & Gabriele NANDLINGER, "'Europe awake': Europas Neonazis mobilisieren mit Rechtsrock nach Jena", in *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung: Rechtsextremismus*, 2007, http://www.bpb.de/themen/VXX3WN,0,0,Europe_awake.htm (2 April 2010).

(45) *Fest der Völker*, "Festival website", 2008, <http://www.n-w-j.de/festdervoelker> (2 April 2010).

festival in the tradition of Nazi mass events in the Third Reich and makes a direct reference to National Socialism. The festival is organised by the NPD⁽⁴⁶⁾ and the *Freie Kameradschaft*⁽⁴⁷⁾ scene with some thousand neo-Nazis taking part annually. Politically, the festival calls for the acceptance of ethno-pluralism in the European skinhead and neo-Nazi movement. The website call for the first festival reads:

“Nationalists are not xenophobic [...], we esteem every culture and every man and woman. Yet, we are of the opinion that every man and woman and every culture have their ancestral place in this world, and everyone should respect that”⁽⁴⁸⁾.

The event has a strong ‘international’ character, with parts of the website being translated into fifteen European languages. This European focus marks the special character of the event. The festival’s motto and its transnational outlook demonstrate the attempt by the European far right to move beyond co-operation towards a pan-Europeanist discourse.

The website for the 2010 festival (which was cancelled due to organisational issues, as well as opposition by the local authorities) states that future festivals will happen over two days and provide more room for international exchange: “There shall be better possibilities to strike up conversations with comrades [*Kameraden*] from other European states”⁽⁴⁹⁾. Practically, it is especially through the international dimension of the Blood and Honour music network that the festival can reach a European-wide audience. On the network’s online discussion forum there are sections where, for example, Hungarian, Russian, Greek, and Swiss neo-Nazis discuss the festival. Strong connections also exist between the festival organisers and Blood and Honour sections from Italy⁽⁵⁰⁾. Many in the crowd are clearly attracted by an international line-up of fascist rock bands, such as the Slovenian ‘Before the War’, the Czech ‘Conflict’, the Dutch ‘Brigade M’, or the British ‘Brutal Attack’. Just as with the music bookings, the range of parties and political organisations represented at the *Fest der Völker* tells of its transnational ambitions. Apart from the leader of the German NPD, Udo Voigt, speakers at the event have included delegates from neo-Nazi organisation from over a dozen European countries, including regularly from England, Holland, Austria, Italy, Romania and Hungary. Many tend to come from East and Central European countries (due to the close proximity of the festival’s East German location), such as party and movement

(46) The NPD is currently the most prominent German far right party. In the words of Liang, it “has developed a coherent foreign political vision in which Germany will lead in a Europe of nations, free from the domination of the United States, from the economic vicissitudes of economic globalization, and resolute in the face of danger from Muslim extremists and asylum seekers” (C.S. LIANG, *Europe for the Europeans*, op. cit., p. 139).

(47) The *Freie Kameradschaften*, or ‘free fellowships’ are organizations of Germany’s militant neo-Nazi scene, which are locally organized but often affiliated to loose regional networks.

(48) Quoted in Hannes GIESSLER, “Fest der Völker, Karneval der Kulturen”, in *Conne Island News Flyer*, 122, 2005, <http://www.conne-island.de/nf/122/3.html> (4 April 2010).

(49) Fest der Völker, “Festival website”, entry from 1 September 2010, <http://www.nw-j.de/festdervoeelker/>.

(50) Max BAUER, “Hintergründe zum ‘Fest der Völker’ und ‘Blood & Honour’”, *Indymedia Germany*, 2008, <http://de.indymedia.org/2008/09/226259.shtml> (6 April 2010).

leaders from the Romanian *Noua Dreapta*, the *Bulgarian Nationalist Union*, from Czech and Slovakian ultra-nationalist groups, the Greek *Golden Dawn*, and high-ranking activists from Blood and Honour in the region. There are also frequent visits by representatives from Western and Northern Europe, especially from the Netherlands and Scandinavia.

Despite the participation by high-profile music groups and political representatives from across the continent, the rank-and-file mobilisation to the festival has been less international in character. In large parts this is certainly due to the insecure arrangements and last-minute (re-)organisation that the event has become associated with. Confronted with pressure by local authorities and protest from anti-fascist and civil society groups, the event has had to sporadically change locations or even be cancelled altogether. Audience members and participants are therefore largely drawn from the region, including Eastern Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Austria. In 2005, despite the wide mobilisation across Europe and an expected 1,500 participants, only around half that number attended. By 2007, this had increased to up to 2,000. In subsequent years, local authorities warned of several thousand neo-Nazis from across Europe, yet those numbers have not been attained.

Ideologically, the festival has tried to make connections to the neo-Nazi anti-globalisation campaigns⁽⁵¹⁾. The speakers, campaigns and political content of the festival make strong references to the anti-capitalist and anti-globalisation campaigns of some German neo-Nazi organisations. They criticise the capitalist system for its globalising trends. In opposition they tout their version of “national socialism”. The festival organisers oppose the “parasitic [*volksfremd*] and ubiquitous [*raumlos*] capitalist ideology”, which they describe as alienated from the people and without grounding in a concrete national setting. Instead, they posit a Europe of “sovereign nation-states”, nationally-defined economies [*raumorientierte nationale Volkswirtschaften*] and cultural autarky. Further, the festival call proclaims: “We are Europe!: The policies of the globalists push the interests of the European peoples further into the background.” (idem). The call also accuses the Brussels ‘Eurocrats’ of turning Europeans into nomadic slaves without allegiance to homeland, culture or family. It entails a mix of classic scaremongering of mass immigration and race riots coupled with foreshortened critiques of capitalism and Americanisation. Particularly, the rhetoric of a degradation of values and culture is an attempt to make the connection between extreme right ideology and the conservative centre via New Right concepts. The call finally proclaims: “That is what we oppose! The globalists haven’t taken us and the peoples [*Völker*] into account. With the advancement of the uprooting and commodification of the peoples and people also comes a growing and healthy nationalism...”. The Europe of nation-states is heralded as a model for co-operation to defend the continent from multiculturalism: “The future speaks the language of the peoples [*Völker*], and not the language of ‘One World’! Europe shall live or shall die with us!” (52).

(51) ASJ Jena, “10.06.06 Jena: Operation Voelkerball”, *Indymedia Germany*, 2006, <http://de.indymedia.org/2006/05/147507.shtml> (2 April 2010).

(52) Quoted in ASJ Jena, 10.06.06 Jena, *op. cit.*

Of course there have been massive counter protests against the festival⁽⁵³⁾. In 2005, street blockades by anti-fascists led to the festival being held on a car park outside Jena rather than in the city centre. At the same time, 8,000 people held a protest march against the right-wing festival. In 2006, the festival was completely shut down; not by anti-fascist protest however. In the wake of the football World Cup being held in Germany, the town of Jena saw itself incapable of diverting police resources to the festival and counter protests and banned any political event to take place. In 2007, 1,500 supporters of the far right attempted to reach the festival ground in Jena. They were stopped by protests and blockades by 3,000 anti-fascists. It took police three hours to lift the blockades and ensure that the festival could take place with delay. In 2008, the anti-fascist alliance against the festival could register two successes in the weeks leading up to it. The public announcement of blockades of those trying to reach the festival site led the NPD organisers to change the venue from the town of Jena to the smaller town of Altenburg. Also, it was found that the international Blood and Honour online forum could be hacked, and internal data could be made public. Anti-fascists were hoping that this information could contribute to the proof of a continuing existence of a Blood and Honour section in Germany (which was forbidden in 2000) and of a link to the *Fest der Völker*. An anti-fascist alliance in Altenburg was unable to blockade the festival, but managed to delay the arrival of most of its participants for two hours⁽⁵⁴⁾.

Despite resistance from both radical anti-fascist groups and civil society actors, the German neo-Nazi scene continues to organise large-scale events, some of them with European significance, aimed at building a shared identity and cultural understanding in the far right movement. Liang also notes that the “perceived common identity with other European populist radical right parties has led German far right groups to invest considerable energy into creating a pan-European network”⁽⁵⁵⁾. She identifies the attempt to build common markers such as ethno-pluralism, anti-Americanism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia as the far right’s basis for a ‘Europe for the Europeans’.

The annual commemoration of Rudolf Hess’ death is a further event that attracts European neo-Nazis and neo-fascists to Germany. Hess was a leading NSDAP politician and deputy to Adolf Hitler. He was prosecuted and convicted by the international military tribunal in Nuremberg and subsequently sentenced to life in prison, where he committed suicide 1987. Hess’s death has given rise to a number of conspiracy theories as to its cause. In the official version he hanged himself in the prison’s gardens, although members of his family believe he was murdered by the British Secret Intelligence Service. In right-wing extremist circles this has elevated him to the status of a martyr. He has also become a figurehead of the contemporary neo-Nazi movement because he had never shown remorse for his role in the NSDAP and the Holocaust. Significantly, the Hess myth is able to rally together large parts of the European far Right and white nationalists for coordinated action.

(53) M. BAUER, “Hintergründe zum ‘Fest der Völker’ und ‘Blood & Honour’”, *op. cit.*

(54) Aktionsnetzwerk Jena, “Nazi-Fest in Altenburg drei Stunden blockiert”, 2008, http://www.aktionsnetzwerk.de/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=102&Itemid=20 (2 April 2010).

(55) C. S. LIANG, “Nationalism Ensures Peace”, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

They commemorate his attempt to foster a European (Anglo-German) peace agreement as early as 1941 that would be based upon the co-operation and understanding of European white races. In 1941, Hess flew to Scotland to meet with Douglas Douglas-Hamilton, who he thought to be the leader of the British peace movement. Instead, Hess was taken into British custody as a prisoner of war. It is assumed that Hess had planned (with or without Hitler's knowledge) to enter peace negotiations with Britain to avoid a war that he termed "suicidal for the white race"⁽⁵⁶⁾.

Since the first anniversary of Hess' death in 1988, the 'Rudolf Hess memorial march' has attracted European neo-Nazis to the small town of Wunsiedel where Hess is buried. From 1991 to 2000 however, the demonstrations were not allowed to take place in Wunsiedel and were carried out in other German towns as well as neighbouring countries such as the Netherlands, Luxemburg and Denmark. In the early 2000s the authorised marches achieved participant numbers well into the thousands and thus counted among the largest neo-Nazi demonstrations in Europe, attracting neo-Nazis from across the continent. Already days after Hess' death in 1987, neo-Nazis came to Wunsiedel to take part in the funeral, which they were prevented from joining by the authorities. From 1988 onwards the authorised marches grew in numbers drawing from both neo-Nazis and 'old'-Nazi cadres, including participants from other European countries. By 1990, the number of demonstrators had already increased to over 1,500. That year was also marked by violent clashes between participants from the Hess memorial march and autonomous anti-fascist groups, leading to the prohibition of the march from the following year onwards. In 1991 thus, political demonstrations were forbidden for Wunsiedel and the surrounding region, forcing the neo-Nazis to protest in the town of Bayreuth instead. Three thousand Hess supporters, many from across the continent, followed the call to protest against the ban to march in Wunsiedel. Until 2001, police bans forced the marches to move to other cities and even neighbouring countries, or to hold smaller decentralised memorial events. None of those could attract the same numbers of participants as the Wunsiedel marches. As a further blow to the mobilisations, on the ten-year anniversary of Hess' death in 1997, nation-wide bans on the commemorations were enacted and over 500 neo-Nazis were arrested, resulting in a big decline of memorial events in the following three years. March organisers eventually had the ban lifted in 2001 and returned to Wunsiedel. This time, anti-fascist mobilisations remained weak and thousands of European neo-Nazis came together that year and in the following years up until 2005. The numbers of participants culminated in 2004 with up to 5,000 neo-Nazis from all over Europe. Following the success in 2004 the marches were banned again, resulting in a sharp decline in numbers and events.

The transnational dimension is again significant for the Rudolf Hess mobilisations. Commemorative events are advertised on websites and online forums across Europe and the US. Especially the larger marches in Wunsiedel drew participants from outside of Germany. Early on there were only a few delegations from Western European countries, such as Austria,

(56) Eugene DAVIDSON, *The Trial of the Germans: An Account of the Twenty-two Defendants before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg*, Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 1997.

Belgium, and the Netherlands. However, already in 1994 and 1995 the first commemorative demonstrations were organised in Luxemburg and Denmark respectively, partly to escape banning orders in Germany. In the second half of the 1990s, organisers resorted to more decentralised action repertoires, including smaller, local events, flyposting and graffiti, as well as actions against political opponents. Later the large Wunsiedel demonstrations in the early 2000s drew increasingly larger numbers of non-German participants. Some carried their respective national flags on the marches or displayed banners with the group's name and country flag. They included extreme nationalists from as far away as Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Bulgaria, Spain, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, England, and Scotland; though more participants came from closer places in Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Switzerland, or Italy.

While some of the German organisations provide coaches for their members, many of the foreign participants rely on personal travel arrangements by car, as the Rudolf Hess march organisers do not publicly arrange convergence or sleeping spaces⁽⁵⁷⁾. In the last few years, the attempts to march in Wunsiedel and other German towns have been hit by bans again, and it seems like the ability of the Hess myth to bring together European 'old-style' Nazis, neo-fascists, and militant ultra-nationalists in large-scale mobilisations has ebbed somewhat. Nonetheless, decentralised and smaller publicity-seeking actions are still carried out every year on the anniversary of Hess' death; mostly in Germany, but also Europe-wide.

The continuing importance of the Rudolf Hess commemorations for the European neo-Nazi scene not only points to the power of mobilisation of a martyr figure. It also indicates the meaning attached to a personality who, despite his national identity as Hitler's deputy, is perceived as having retained a certain degree of integrity and loyalty to the vision of a united fascist Europe. The significance of Hess's persona is not his position in the Nazi hierarchy, but his effort to settle for a pan-European solution to German aggression. Yet, the marches in Wunsiedel and the decentralised acts of commemoration represent a wider trend. Just like the counter-globalisation left and the anti-capitalist movements, parts of the neo-Nazi scene use a number of annual mass events and symbolic dates to bring together activists from across Europe – not only in an attempt to foster co-operation, but also to mobilise through a sense of pan-European identity.

Conclusions

I have analyzed contemporary neo-Nazi mobilisations, especially in Germany, as a social movement whose ultra-nationalism is nonetheless compatible with pan-Europeanism. While race can still be a defining factor in extreme nationalist politics, it often takes an 'ethno-pluralistic' turn, whereby culture, or culturally-defined ethnicity, is seen as the predominant marker of

(57) Thomas DOERFLER & Andreas KLAERNER, "Der 'Rudolf-Heß-Gedenkmarsch' in Wunsiedel: Rekonstruktion eines nationalistischen Phantasmas", 2004, http://www.rechtsextremismusforschung.de/Doerfler-Klaerner_wunsiedel2004.pdf (4 April 2010).

a community. Advocates of ethno-pluralism have thus argued that European nations can equally contribute towards the construction of a European identity.

Origins of extreme nationalist Europeanism can certainly be found in the reaction to Enlightenment thought and technological advancement. Europe was seen as a potential bulwark against the destructiveness of modernity, promising home and community. A common theme running through from this 'European pessimism' to contemporary far right thought is the reaction against 'civilisation' in favour of the 'rediscovery' of European 'culture'. This was certainly the case in post-1918 Germany, a period and region marked by immense economic and social upheaval. An emerging 'Conservative Revolution' movement responded to the perceived chaos and disorder with radical nationalism and the call for the reawakening of an 'authentic' European order. Sometimes this was accompanied with 'socialist' radicalism, marrying a longing for authority and stability with the belief that only revolutionary change could achieve this. The idea of Europe thus played a central role in the ideological precursor to Hitler's version of National Socialism. The NSDAP would eventually occupy a position between the nationalist authoritarianism of the conservatives and the revolutionary National Bolshevism of Strasser and others. Hitler would successfully eliminate both political adversaries in the 'Night of the Long Knives'. The idea of Europe would continue to live throughout the Third Reich, however. Moreover, the role of Europe in National Socialism was most fervently put forward by Oswald Mosley in England during and after the war.

Two examples of large contemporary neo-Nazi mobilisations are cited in this article to investigate how such far right Europeanist ideology manifests politically and organisationally. First, the *Fest der Völker*, a yearly political music festival that takes place in Eastern Germany, attracts skinheads, white-supremacists and neo-Nazis from across Europe. It is explicitly advertised as a European festival that sees its audience as a young vanguard of European nationalism. Apart from rock music from bands belonging to the 'Blood and Honour' network, it features speeches from many major far right parties and organisations in Europe. Second, the 'Rudolf Hess marches' commemorate the death of Hitler's second-in-command. They draw neo-Nazi participants from a number of European countries and have become one of the largest annual street demonstrations of the far right today, taking place in Germany but also in neighbouring countries. Hess is remembered not just for his unrepentant 'martyr' status amongst young fascists, but also because of his attempt to prevent a total war between European nations. The examples also show that extreme nationalist political action continues to have a significant Europeanist dimension to it.

ABSTRACT

The Transnationality of European Nationalist Movements

This article investigates the rationale behind transnational mobilisations of neo-Nazi and fascist social movements. It argues that pan-Europeanism is a central tenet, not a counter-principle, of extreme nationalist thought. The focus of the paper lies on contemporary examples of German extra-parliamentary organisations that subscribe to an anti-globalist or anti-capitalist ideology, and on their philosophical and historical precursors. It analyses those strains of reactionary thought that have aimed to 'preserve' and 'reawaken' a European Spirit or Culture in defence against the perceived threats of globalisation, and that today form the background to transnational co-operation and networking on the far right agenda.

Transnational networks – extreme right – neo-Nazism – pan-Europeanism

SAMENVATTING

De transnationaliteit van Europese nationalistische bewegingen

Dit artikel onderzoekt grondgedachten en beweegredenen van de transnationale mobilisatie van fascistische en neonazistische sociale bewegingen. Het stelt vast dat pan-Europeïsme een basisdogma vormt, en geen contraprincipe, van het extreem-nationalistische gedachtegoed. Dat wordt aangetoond aan de hand van enkele eigentijdse voorbeelden van Duitse extraparlamentaire organisaties die een antiglobalistische of antikapitalistische ideologie aanhangen, en hun filosofische en historische voorlopers. Daarbij worden reactionaire ideeën belicht die streven naar het 'behoud' en de 'heropwekking' van een Europese Geest of Cultuur als een dam tegen vermeende dreigingen van globalisering. Zij vormen vandaag de achtergrond van transnationale samenwerking en netwerking tussen extreemrechtse groepen.

Transnationale netwerken – extreemrechts – neonazisme – pan-Europeïsme

RÉSUMÉ

La transnationalité des mouvements nationalistes européens

Cet article examine les idées de base et les motivations de la mobilisation transnationale des mouvements sociaux néonazis et fascistes. Il démontre que le pan-européisme, loin d'en être le contre-pied, constitue au contraire la base même de l'idéologie d'extrême-droite nationaliste. L'étude se focalise sur les organisations allemandes extraparlamentaires qui souscrivent à une idéologie anticapitaliste ou 'antimondialiste' et sur leurs antécédents historiques et philosophiques. Elle analyse les idées réactionnaires visant à la 'préservation' ou au 'réveil' d'un Esprit ou d'une Culture européens contre les menaces de la mondialisation. Cette dernière constitue l'arrière-fonds de la coopération et du maillage transnational entre les groupements d'extrême droite.

Réseaux transnationaux – extrême-droite – néonazi – pan-européisme